

March 5, 2021

The Honorable Gary A. Winfield  
The Honorable Steven J. Stafstrom  
The Honorable Alex Kasser  
The Honorable Matt Blumenthal  
The Honorable John A. Kissel  
The Honorable Craig C. Fishbein  
Joint Committee on Judiciary  
Connecticut General Assembly  
210 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Chairs Winfield and Stafstrom, Vice Chairs Kasser and Blumenthal, Ranking Members Kissel and Fishbein, and Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

I am proud to testify in support of Proposed Bill No. 6321, An Act Concerning the Adoption and Implementation of the Connecticut Parentage Act.

The Connecticut Parentage Act (CPA) ensures all children have equal access to the security of a legal parent-child relationship, regardless of the circumstances of their birth, or the marital status, gender, or sexual orientation of their parents.

**Updating our parentage law is important to me because I am the non-biological mother to my 3-year old daughter, Ryann. I couldn't imagine the government being able to tell me that I don't have proper parental rights if something were to happen to her other mother (my wife) or if our marriage were to end. I helped make the decision to pursue fertility treatments to bring a child into our family, I was there when she was born, I am listed as her parent on her birth certificate and most importantly, I have been in her life everyday since then, raising her and caring for her. I will always be present in her life and I would feel much more comfortable knowing that no one could legally say otherwise. I can't imagine how it would affect me but more importantly, how it would affect Ryann.**

Connecticut has been a leader in protecting families and children, including children raised by same-sex couples. But as it stands now, Connecticut parentage law is **outdated and unconstitutional**. It leaves many children without the protection of a legal relationship with their parents. **The legal parent-child relationship, which is the root of so many rights and responsibilities, is core to a child's stability and well-being. Outdated parentage laws mean that Connecticut's children are vulnerable.** Among other deficits, the state currently does not protect same-sex or unmarried couples raising children and leaves the relationship between a non-biological parent and child vulnerable. Connecticut also lacks protections for families formed through assisted reproduction. Connecticut is the *only New England state without protections for unmarried non-biological parents and their children.*

The CPA ensures that parentage law reflects and protects all families in Connecticut. Thank you for your consideration of my testimony regarding Proposed Bill No. 6321.

Sincerely,

Leah Padgett  
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